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175 657 567 464 465 for all cotton planted, distributed among them according to the amount done by each, a very small sum, they thought, for listing, planting, and hoeing. Pierce had planned to pay the Negroes for their work a little at a time, hoping to make them see that it was to their interest to tend the cotton after it was planted, but they were slow to grasp the significance of wages.[26]

175 657 567 464 •702 Plantation work was further interrupted and the suspicion of the Negroes further aroused by an unexpected order from Major-General David Hunter, commanding the Department of the South, for the collection of all Negroes on the plantations between eighteen and forty-five able to bear arms, who were to be sent forthwith to the camp at Hilton Head. Pierce protested against the order as being contrary to the President's intentions and the instructions of the Treasury Department, and he was finally able to obtain the exemption of the drivers and a promise of the return of all those who were unwilling to bear arms. Nevertheless, he lost 600 laborers by this conscription and forfeited the confidence of many who were left behind.

175 657 567 702 The confusion resulting from the order disorganized the whole system, for it discouraged the superintendents and antagonized the Negroes. In most instances, the Negroes were taken from the fields without being permitted to go home for so much as a jacket, the soldiers, however, sometimes allowing wives and children to fetch a few necessary articles. On some plantations the wailing and screaming were loud and prolonged, and the women threw

[26] Pierce, "Second Report," p. 320; *Letters and Diary of Laura M. Towne*, p. 18.

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themselves in despair upon the ground, while on other plantations where the news had leaked out, the men took to the woods and the marshes, and had to be hunted down by the soldiers.[27]

In June, 1862, the "experiment" was transferred from the Treasury to the War Department, and Brigadier-General Rufus Saxton placed in command with instructions to take possession of abandoned plantations and to make rules and regulations for the cultivation of the land.[28] Pierce was offered a place on his staff with the rank of colonel, but forseeing, no doubt, that the plan of the experiment was soon to be altered, he declined the appointment. General Saxton was, from the first, sympathetic with the Negro and honestly attempted to carry out the spirit of Pierce's plan, but he was constantly annoyed and prevented from doing so by those who were not.

General Saxton inherited the confusion which Pierce had found harmful to the successful cultivation of the plantations and which in his brief command he was unable to overcome. The superintendents at once besieged him with requests to make some change in the plan of management before another planting season, but he was slow to take up the matter. In the autumn Charles P. Ware, in despair, wrote to a friend, "We need people at headquarters who understand the details of plantation work. . . . There is a general want of concerted system on all the places. Each superintendent has to do as he thinks best in all cases himself. General plans are usually determined on just too late."[29] It was more imperative than

[27] *Official Records*, ser. III, vol. II, serial no. 123, pp. 52-60.
[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 27, 152, 153.
[29] *Letters from Port Royal*, p. 93.

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an estate which had numbered 1,284 acres.[8] All but Edgar W. Fripp after a few years sold their land in small plots to Negroes. Fripp, a minor at the time of the war, retained his holding until recently when he sold it for a hunting preserve.

The prosperity in which the freedmen of Port Royal found themselves in 1865 was largely delusive, for it was the prosperity of war times. The presence of the soldiers afforded a ready market for whatever the Negroes had to sell; the presence of the camps offered ready work at high wages for those who wanted it; the fostering care of the Freedman's Bureau kept them from starvation in time of necessity. The magnificent bounty of $300 which "Government" offered all volunteers led many a St. Helena youth to enter the army. The bounty money he used to buy ten acres of land and the equipment for his "plantation," keeping out $100, perhaps, to "pleasure" himself. Whenever it was possible to peddle chickens, fish, and garden truck to the soldiers, the freedmen never raised cotton, for they got high prices for their wares.

All who had bought land by the close of the war, had for the most part erected their own cabins and equipped them with a few pieces of cheap furniture, beds, tables, and chairs. They now must have plates and knives and forks. They must have both a work suit and a "Sunday best," and the cloth must be of the finest. They must have carts, buggies, and horses. Indeed, their purchases at the trade stores were so liberal that the military authorities several times interfered to prevent what they consid-

[8] Direct Tax Case, No. 17, 498 filed in Court of Claims March 25, 1892; No. 17, 366 filed Feb. 6, 1892.